

## Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 NEA-10 DLOS-09 IO-13 COME-00  
INT-05 L-03 SS-15 SP-02 /075 W  
-----020157 150728Z /23

P 150454Z FEB 78  
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4944  
INFO AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY  
AMEMBASSY SUVA  
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 WELLINGTON 00777

E.O. 11652: XGDS  
TAGS: EFIS  
SUBJECT: ESTABLISHMENT OF SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL FISHER-  
IES AGENCY (SPRFA)

REF: (A) STATE 034308, (B) PORT MORESBY 0221,  
(C) SUVA 0241, (D) PORT MORESBY 0117, (E) PORT MORESBY  
0150, (F) 1977 TOKYO 18829

1. SUMMARY: CHAIRMAN OF SUVA SESSION OF SPRFA  
NEGOTIATIONS, CHRIS BEEBE, IS FEARFUL THAT MOMENTUM TOWARD  
MARCH NEGOTIATING SESSION HAS BEEN LOST. HE HAS  
SPECULATED WHETHER GNZ WILL PERMIT HIM TO DEPART TEHRAN  
IN JUNE TO CHAIR WHAT HE BELIEVES WILL BE CONCLUSIVE  
SESSION OF AGENCY NEGOTIATIONS. BEEBE ALSO CAUTIONS  
AGAINST ATTEMPTING TO CIRCUMVENT GEOFFREY DABB IN  
DISCUSSIONS WITH PNG ON SPRFA AND SAYS DABB CAN PLAY  
USEFUL ROLE IN RESOLVING HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES PROBLEM.  
END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF HAS HAD TWO OPPORTUNITIES IN PAST WEEK TO  
DISCUSS WITH CHAIRMAN CHRIS BEEBE TIMING OF NEXT  
NEGOTIATING SESSION TO ESTABLISH SPRFA. BEEBE AND GNZ  
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FULLY SHARE US DESIRE FOR MARCH SESSION BUT ARE EXTREMELY  
PESSIMISTIC THAT SEVERAL OTHER SPEC MEMBERS--PARTICULARLY  
PNG, COOKS AND FIJI--WOULD AGREE TO A MARCH TIMING. BEEBE  
HAS ALREADY COMPLETED HIS TOUR AS HEAD OF MFA ECONOMIC  
DIVISION AND IS NOW PREPARING FOR A LATE MARCH/EARLY APRIL  
DEPARTURE AS GNZ AMBASSADOR TO TEHRAN. HE EXPRESSED  
CONFIDENCE THAT ONE MORE NEGOTIATING SESSION WOULD RESULT

IN THE DRAFTING OF A SUITABLE TEXT FOR CREATION OF SPRFA AND IS ANXIOUS TO RETAIN CHAIRMANSHIP THROUGH NEXT SESSION. BEEBE SAID MFA ALSO WANTS HIM TO SEE THIS DUTY THROUGH TO COMPLETION AND, WHILE A TWO-WEEK ABSENCE FROM TEHRAN IN JUNE FOR WRAP-UP SESSION WAS NOT PREFERRED, HE DID NOT CONSIDER IT IMPOSSIBLE.

3. BEEBE DISCUSSED AT LENGTH ROLE OF PNG'S GEOFFREY DABB IN SPRFA NEGOTIATIONS. HE CAUTIONED AGAINST BLAMING ANY DELAY IN MARCH MEETING ON DABB'S OR PNG'S INTRANSIGENCE, NOTING THAT AUSTRALIA AND PNG HAVE LONG BEEN SCHEDULED TO DISCUSS "VEXATIOUS" TORRES STRAITS ISSUE IN MARCH. ADDITIONALLY, THE PERSONNEL FLEXIBILITY OF SEVERAL OF THE SMALLER FORUM STATES IS EXTREMELY TIGHT, HE SAID. GIVEN A CHOICE HE IS SURE SEVERAL ADDITIONAL STATES WOULD JOIN PNG IN DELAYING NEXT SPRFA SESSION UNTIL AFTER LOS SESSION. QUESTIONED ABOUT WHETHER DABB MIGHT ALSO HAVE SOME SECRET FOLLOWERS AMONG OTHER FORUM DELEGATIONS IN HIS OPEN OPPOSITION TO THE INCLUSION OF THE US IN SPRFA, BEEBE SAID HE DOUBTED IT. MOST AGREED THAT WHILE US WAS "ESSENTIALLY" A DISTANT WATER FISHING NATION, SPRFA HAD NO HOPE OF SUCCEEDING WITHOUT USG PARTICIPATION. EMBOFF ASKED ABOUT THE GNZ'S VIEW OF DABB'S COMMUNICATIONS WITH SENIOR PNG OFFICIALS ON THE SPRFA NEGOTIATIONS (REFTEL D). BEEBE REPLIED THAT THE ESSENTIAL POINT IS THAT DABB ENJOYS THE FULL CONFIDENCE CONFIDENTIAL

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OF PNG LEADERSHIP. GNZ IS CONFIDENT THEIR ASSUMPTIONS IN THAT RESPECT ARE CORRECT AND THAT, THEREFORE, IT WOULD BE FOOLHARDY TO TRY TO WORK AROUND RATHER THAN THROUGH DABB. HE SAID DABB IS NOT COMPLETELY OBSTRUCTIONIST IN ANY EVENT, AND OFFERED AS EVIDENCE HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT DABB HAS NOW COMPLETED THE DRAFTING OF A FORUM "PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE" ON COASTAL STATES' SOVEREIGN RIGHTS OVER HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES. THIS WOULD BE SIGNED BY FORUM STATES AFTER CONCLUSION OF SPRFA AGREEMENT AND WOULD BE A PRACTICAL SOLUTION TO ONE OF THE MOST TROUBLESOME ISSUES AT SUVA TALKS. (PARA FOUR, REFTEL F)

4. ON ISSUE OF FINANCING SPRFA, BEEBE SAID SPEC SECRETARIAT WAS BEING "STUPID" IN NOT APPROACHING USG FOR EVEN MODEST SIZED VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION TOWARD EARLY EXPENSES OF ESTABLISHING AGENCY. HE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD SEVERAL STATES HAVE BEEN APPROACHED BY THE SECRETARIAT AND HAVE PLEDGED, BUT TO DATE THE US HAS NOT BEEN APPROACHED, APPARENTLY OUT OF A MISPLACED FEAR OF WHAT PNG'S REACTION WOULD BE. (EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S ADVICE WHETHER OR NOT THIS ASSERTION IS

ACCURATE.)

5. COMMENT: PAUL COTTON, HEAD OF MFA'S PACIFIC DIVISION AND DELEGATE AT SPRFA SUVA TALKS, WAS IN PORT MORESBY LAST WEEK FOR BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS AND IS A DELEGATE THIS WEEK IN SYDNEY AT ASIAN REGIONAL COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING. COTTON TOLD EMBOFF PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE THAT ONE OF THE ITEMS ON HIS AGENDA FOR BOTH STOPS WAS TO TRY TO STIMULATE FRESH MOVEMENT TOWARD A

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 NEA-10 DLOS-09 IO-13 COME-00  
INT-05 L-03 SS-15 SP-02 /075 W  
-----020713 150731Z /10

P 150454Z FEB 78  
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4945  
INFO AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY  
AMEMBASSY SUVA  
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 WELLINGTON 00777

MARCH NEGOTIATING SESSION OF SPRFA. HE SAID  
HE WAS NOT VERY OPTIMISTIC, HOWEVER. END COMMENT.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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